

O. HENRY'S LAST AND BEST SHORT STORIES

THE WHOLE WORLD KIN

The Rheumatic Romance of a Burglar and His Victim.

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No to be published in book form after Sept. 12.

THE burglar stepped inside the window quickly, and then he took his time. A burglar who respects his art always takes his time before taking anything else.

The house was a private residence. By its boarded front door and uncrimmed Boston ivy the burglar knew that the mistress of it was sitting on some ocean-side piazza telling a sympathetic man in a yachting cap that no one had ever understood her sensitive, lonely heart.

He knew by the light in the third-story front windows, and by the lateness of the season that the master of the house had come home, and would soon extinguish his light and retire. For it was September of the year and of the soul, in which season the house's good man comes to consider roof gardens and stenographers as vanities, and to

and posing as a paperhanger, while after dark he piles his nefarious occupation of burglary.

His mother is an extremely wealthy and respected resident of Ocean Grove, and when he is conducted to his cell he asks at once for a nail file and the Police Gazette. He always has a wife in every State in the Union and dances in all the Territories, and the newspapers print his matrimonial gallery out of their stock of cuts of the ladies who were cured by only one bottle after having been given up by five doctors, experiencing great relief after the first dose.

The burglar wore a blue sweater. He was neither a Raffles nor one of the chiefs from Holly's Kitchen. The police would have been baffled had they attempted to classify him. They have not yet heard of the respectable, unassuming burglar who is neither above nor below his station.

This burglar of the third class began to prowl. He wore no masks, dark trousers, or gum shoes. He carried a 38-calibre revolver in his pocket, and he checked peppermint gum thoughtfully.

The furniture of the house was swathed in its summer dust protectors. The silver was far away in safe deposit vaults. The burglar expected no remarkable "haul." His objective point was that dimly lighted room where the master of the house should be sleeping heavily after whatever advice he had sought to lighten the burden of his loneliness. A "rough" might be made there to the extent of legitimate, fair professional profits—loose money, a watch, a jewelled stick-pin—nothing exorbitant or beyond reason. He had seen the window left open and had taken the chance.

The burglar softly opened the door of the lighted room. The gas was turned low. A man lay in the bed asleep. On the dresser lay many things in confusion—a crumpled roll of bills, a watch, keys, three poker chips, crushed cigars, a pink silk hair bow and an unopened bottle of bromo seltzer for a halibut in the morning.

The burglar took three steps toward the dresser. The man in the bed suddenly uttered a squeaky groan and opened his eyes. His right hand slid under his pillow, but remained there. "Lay still," said the burglar in conversational tone. Burglars of the third type do not hiss. The citizen in the bed looked at the round end of the burglar's pistol and lay still.

"Now hold up both your hands," commanded the burglar. The citizen had a little, pointed, brown and gray beard, like that of a painless dentist. He looked solid, esteemed, respectable and disgusted. He sat up in bed and raised his right hand above his head.

"Up with the other one," ordered the burglar. "You might be amphibious and shoot with your left. You can count two, can't you? Hurry up, now."

"Can't raise the other one," said the citizen, with a contortion of his features.

"What's the matter with it?" "Rheumatism in the shoulder."

"Inflammation?" "Was. The inflammation has gone down."

The burglar stood for a moment or two, looking his gun on the afflicted burglar's pistol and lay still.

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"EVER TRY RATTLE 'SNAKE OIL'?"

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of the year I tried Finkelham's Extract, Balm of Gilead position, and Pott's Pain Pulverizer; but I think it was the buckeye I carried in my pocket which done the trick.

"Is yours worse in the morning or at night?" asked the citizen.

"Night," said the burglar. "Just when I'm busiest. Say, take down that arm of yours—I guess you won't say I did you ever try Bickerstaff's Blood Builder?"

"I never did. Does yours come in paroxysms or is it a steady pain?"

The burglar cut down on the foot of the bed and rested his gun on his knee.

"It jumps," said he. "It strikes me when I ain't looking for it. I had to give up second-story work because I got stuck sometimes half-way up. Tell you what—I don't believe the bloomers doctors know what to do for it."

"Same here. I've gotten a thousand dollars without getting any relief. Yours swell any?"

"Of mornings. And when it's going to rain—great Christopher!"

"Me, too," said the citizen. "I can tell when a streak of humidity hits the side of a tablecloth starts from Florida on its way to New York. And if I pass a theatre where there's an 'East Lynne' matinee going on, my moisture starts my left arm jumping like a toothache."

"It's undiluted—hades!" said the burglar.

"You're dead right," said the citizen. The burglar looked down at his pistol and thrust it into his pocket with an awkward attempt at ease.

"Say, old man," he said, constrainedly, "ever try opodeldoe?"

"Hop!" said the citizen angrily. "Might as well rub on restaurant butter."

"Sure," concurred the burglar. "It's a salve suitable for little Minnie when the kitten scratches her finger. I'll tell you what! We're up against it. I only find one thing that eases her up. Hey? Little old sanitary, ameliorating, last-we-forget Boose. Say—this job's off—busses meet on your clothes and let's go out and have some. 'Cause the liberty, but—ouch! There she goes again!"

"For a week," said the citizen. "I haven't been able to dress myself without help. I'm afraid Thomas is in bed, and—"

"Kimb out," said the burglar. "I'll help you get into your duds."

The conventional returned as a tidal wave and flooded the citizen. He stroked his brown-and-gray beard.

"It's very unusual," he began.

"Here's your shirt," said the burglar. "Fall out. I knew a man who said Ombert's Ointment did him in two weeks so he could use both hands in tying his four-in-hand."

As they were going out the door the citizen turned and started back.

"Let me forget my money," he explained. "I did it on the dresser last night."

The burglar caught him by the right sleeve.

"Come on," he said gruffly. "I ask you. Leave it alone. I've got the price. Ever try witch hazel and oil of wintergreen?"

Betty Vincent's Advice On Courtship and Marriage

"The Etiquette of Calls."

THE etiquette of calls seems to be a bothersome point for young people. Yet, a call, when it is not an awkward one, is one of the very best ways of getting acquainted. It is also a fine test of friendship.

A generation ago, particularly in country places, courtship was almost entirely a matter of calls. When a young man was seen "going to the house regularly," it was understood that an engagement either existed or would shortly exist.

Now we have changed all that. I realize perfectly that it is impossible for many of you girls to entertain frequently at home. That is an inevitable condition in an era of small apartments. But I hope, whenever you are so situated that it is possible, you do receive your man friends in your own parlor.

You have a chance really to know each other then. At the theatre or the baseball game or the beach, you are looking or listening to other things and people besides yourselves. You don't get acquainted, except for a few surface preferences.

The right sort of girl never shows to better advantage than in her own home. Her sweetness, her grace, her repose of manner, her youthful charm are all heightened. She is given just the right background. As for "having a good time," a parlor with a plan and a chafing dish holds limitless possibilities of fun for two congenial young people.

And really, the necessary formalities are very few and simple. It is usual for the young man to ask permission to call, in the first place, although in many instances a friendly invitation from the girl would not be out of place. Even an informal call should not generally be prolonged more than two hours. And when the young man departs he says a word or two about the pleasant evening he has passed. Doesn't sound very difficult, does it?

A First Invitation.

A GIRL who signs herself "S. S." writes: "I have met a young man through business. My mother is also acquainted with him, and we both like him very much. Will it be proper for me to invite him to call, and how shall I word my invitation?"

Particularly as your mother is acquainted with the young man, I should think you might quite properly ask him to call. Why not say, "Mother and I will be glad to see you some evening?"

A Divided Duty.

A MAN who signs himself "B. H." writes: "I am engaged and expect to be married in the fall. I have rented a small unfurnished house. Is it my duty to furnish it, or should my fiancée attend to that?"

The usual custom is for the girl to furnish all the bed and table linen, and possibly the silverware. The man is supposed to supply the furniture and other essentials.

A Late Caller.

A GIRL who signs herself "T. L." writes: "A young man whom I should hate to offend calls on me evenings and stays much longer than is usually considered proper. As he is very sensitive I should like to find a way to let him know that the calling hour is past, without hurting his feelings."

Why not jestingly point to the clock and observe, "Madame Grundy would be shocked if she knew we were keeping such hours." He will laugh, but he should take the hint.

A Mistake

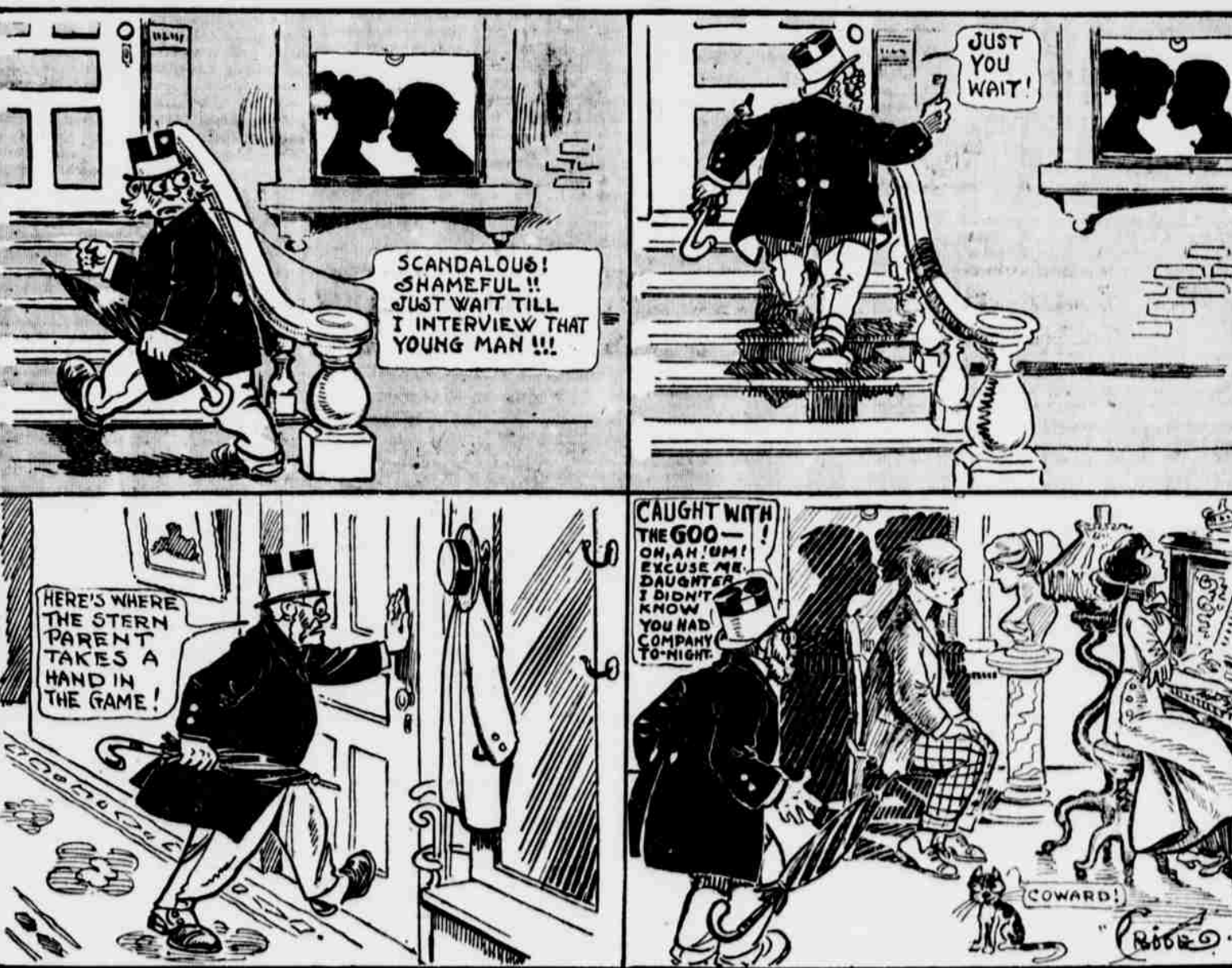
A MAN who signs himself "G. B." writes: "I have been paying attention to a young lady for about a year. Now I find that she is not the kind of girl I care to marry. But I don't want to offend her and would still like to be friends. How shall I act?"

"Breaking it gently" is a delicate process, but if you are not formally engaged to the young lady I should suggest that you simply make your visits and other attentions much less frequent. She will probably grasp the point.

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Caught With the Goods By "Crite"

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SCANDALOUS! SHAMEFUL!! JUST WAIT TILL I INTERVIEW THAT YOUNG MAN!!!

HERE'S WHERE THE STERN PARENT TAKES A HAND IN THE GAME!

CAUGHT WITH THE GOODS ON A HUI! EXCUSE ME, DAUGHTER! I DIDN'T KNOW YOU HAD COMPANY TO-NIGHT!

JUST YOU WAIT!

COWARD!

THE END

"Them Was the Happy Days!"

By Clare Victor Dwiggins

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YES—I REMEMBER JUST AS WELL AS IF IT HAPPENED LAST EVENING—

AND ITS BEEN TWENTYONE YEARS AGO, COME SATURDAY—NO—TWENTYTWO—YES—1889 TWENTYTWO YEARS NEXT SATURDAY—GEE! I CAN TASTE THEM YET!

HE WAS EATING WHITE GRAPES AND I ASKED HIM FOR SOME AND HE SAID HE'D GIVE ME A FEW IF I'D BING GRAMMATER'S CLOCK AND I DID AND HE GAVE ME A HANDFUL & I SUFFERED THEM IN MY MOUTH. THEY WERE CASTOROL CAPSULES!

HA-HA-HA! SURE! SURE! I REMEMBER YOU WAS BICKER FOR A WEEK! RECOLLECT ALL I PUT A WHOLE HANDFUL IN MY MOUTH BATH!

HELLO! THERE'S A GOLD WATCH SOMEBODY'S LOST! ITS MINE!

YES ALE, AND NOW OFFER YOU A HANDFUL OF NICE CURRANTS IN RETURN—SING! YOU BIG LONEST—SING! THEM WAS THE HAPPY DAYS!